

The Morning Astorian.

VOL. L.

ASTORIA, OREGON, THURSDAY DECEMBER 28, 1899

NO. 180

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SHELLING THE BOER LINES

Naval Guns at Chieveley Pouring Lidite Into the Enemy.

LADYSMITH IS ALSO BUSY

Transvaal Troops at Work Strengthening Entrenchments—Both Sides Preparing for Active Hostilities.

CHIEVELEY CAMP, Natal, Tuesday, Dec. 26.—The naval guns began shelling the Boer position at 5 o'clock this morning, using lidite. The shelling continued about two hours. Ever since the engagement at Colenso the enemy has been energetically strengthening their entrenchments. They can be seen galloping from hill to hill. Ladysmith also had a busy day shelling the Boer position on Umbulwana mountain. The bursting shells were plainly visible at Chieveley.

LONDON, Dec. 28, (U. P. A.)—Winston Churchill's arrival at Chieveley Camp is perhaps responsible for some over-coloring of the gravity of the situation, but all today's news conveys the impression that Buller may be impending another attack upon the Boer position.

Certainly, the Boers are not inactive. At both Modder river and Tugela they are said to be strengthening their forces and extending defensive works, which in both cases are virtually almost impregnable.

Dispatches from Chieveley indicate that General Buller's forces will be made at Pieter before attempting another advance. General White's photographs that all was well in Ladysmith December 26.

Competent military critics in London regard the campaign as at a complete deadlock for the present owing to the dispersal of the British forces and for lack of adequate transport. It will be many weeks before Lord Roberts is able to reorganize and make an effective movement.

MILITARY OVERBATED

England Has Not Yet Mobilized as Many Men as Was at First Supposed.

NEW YORK, Dec. 27.—A dispatch to the Tribune from London, says: A latest dispatch from Ladysmith was posted in the war office Tuesday. It was a three day's casualty list with four deaths from fever and dysentery, three men wounded, apparently from shell fire and on a separate entry ten killed and sixteen wounded in what looked like a sortie or reconnaissance last Friday, in which were engaged the Fifth Lancers, who fought as well at Elands Laagto and the remnants of the Gloucester regiment, and the Tenth mountain battery, which were entrapped at Nicholson's Nek.

There were no details and it was possible that a British gun had burst or that the enemy's gun fire had been sufficiently accurate that day to account for so large a casualty list, but the optimists chose to infer that General White's men had been again showing their mettle by venturing outside their lines, especially as Lieutenant Colonel Pawcette, of the Fifth Lancers, the officer apparently in command, was severely wounded.

This regiment was stationed at Pietermaritzburg before the opening of the war, and has lost heavily in officers during the campaign in Natal. The Times correspondent at Stellenbosch describes the general attitude of the Cape Dutch. He says that General Buller's reverse and the news of other British disasters undoubtedly encourage many waverers to join the Boer commandos, although the number of those who have done so is greatly exaggerated.

The last survivors of all arms and branches of the service have been called upon to rejoin their colors. When this summons has been answered it will be possible to judge the effectiveness of the mobilization scheme as a whole, but apparently the military authorities have been over sanguine in assuming that three army corps can be recruited from the first line of reservists. They will certainly have to, but a third will have to be pieced out with militia and volunteers.

It has also become apparent that the militia, which has a paper strength of 110,000, includes 30,000 men of the regular army reserve and is scaled down to 80,000 men in an emergency like the present one. At least 20,000 men have appeared in two places as reserves and a false impression of the country's military resources has been created.

There is no trustworthy news from Buller's army and the military writers are weary of thankless business of planning this campaign for him at a distance of 6,000 miles, especially when frontal attack seems the only resource of British strategy in the field. There

is general agreement, however, among the military men that an effort to force the passage of the river will not be attempted in the second time near Colenso until full control of the southern bank has been secured.

The arrival of the siege train is reported at last at Cape Town. The military authorities have at last supplied their army in South Africa with a dozen heavy guns after the Boers have been dragging siege guns from the Pretoria forts over upper Natal and across the veldt to Magersfontein, and Mafeking and outassing the British horse and field artillery. It is not yet clear whether General Methuen or General Buller will make use of these guns in attacking the strongly fortified positions in front of them.

ENGLAND'S GRACIOUS QUEEN.

For Christmas Tree Party the Merriest Ever Given in Windsor Castle.

NEW YORK, Dec. 27.—A dispatch to the World from Windsor, says: Queen Victoria's Christmas tree-party for the wives and children of Parliament now in South Africa at Windsor Castle, was a scene of unobscured enjoyment.

The guests arrived in royal equipages at 4.15 p. m. and were marshaled in the Waterloo chamber by the mayor of Windsor. There, during the 45 minutes of waiting for the queen to appear, they romped and played round games and rolled on the rich, soft carpets to their hearts' content.

At 7 o'clock St. George's hall was thrown open. Women and children pressed in to find the queen in her wheel chair waiting for her guests beside a towering Christmas tree, glittering with electric lights and bristling with toys.

Princess Christian was the queen's right and Princess Beatrice with her children, on her left. Maids of honor were grouped around. The queen was dressed in black with a black lace shawl across her shoulders and with a peaked widow's cap and she wore a gold framed miniature on her breast.

She smiled somewhat sadly when a hush fell on the throng as they received her presence and the little children gazed curiously at her. She had told the court officials: "We must have plenty of light and brightness for the little ones."

The gorgeous magnificence of the surroundings struck the children with delighted awe.

The queen became radiantly smiling as each mother brought forward her children.

An appropriate gift was taken from the tree by the princesses and the maids of honor and passed to the queen. She handed it with charming motherliness to the little recipients.

Some of the children nervously clung to their mothers' skirts. The queen bent forward encouragingly and watched their bright eyes glisten as she pressed some handsome present into their little hands. Others were bold beyond the limits of courtship, advanced confidently and scrutinized the toys with a critical eye.

The queen was gracious and affable alike to all, and fully alive to the humor of the situation. One over-anxious mother told her little five year old toddler: "Bow, Jimmy, bow."

The boy confused, turned back and made his obeisance in the opposite direction, whereat the queen, with a lace handkerchief to her face almost laughed outright.

The mother pulled the little chap around sharply. The queen gently interposed: "never mind my little fellow," and patted him on the head.

Another lad gave a correct military salute, but the succeeding one beat him by gravely saluting with both hands. The queen gave each an additional toy.

One cheerful old lady went up to her majesty, leaned her hand familiarly on the queen's resting on the side of her chair, and said: "This is the greatest honor of our lives, your majesty." The queen answered: "I have not enjoyed a party more for 20 years. It gladdens my heart to give pleasure to the families of my gallant soldiers."

The children now were creating a tremendous din, a perfect babble of squeaky instruments, thumping of drums, joyous laughter and childish clatter ran through the historic hall sacred to statey functions. Then came the tea at two long tables.

The guests were waited on by the two princesses, the Duke of Connaught and Lord Loren, who saw that the little ones wanted for nothing. Some children would stand on the seats, all became hysterically happy, while the queen wheeled around the tables, addressing some here, some there, telling them: "Be happy, my children, I want to see you enjoy yourselves."

The queen remained in the hall for an hour and a quarter. She then withdrew waving adieu to the party as she went out the door. She showed far greater interest in the boys than in the girls. She asked the names of a few particularly pretty or sturdy youngsters. The entertainment was an unqualified success. The children left reluctantly to be driven to their homes after the merriest party ever held within Windsor castle's storied halls.

CHURCHILL IS AT LORENZO

Story of His Daring Escape From Pretoria Prison.

ENDURED GREAT HARDSHIPS

Tramping for Six Days Without Food and Evading Searching Parties of Boer Guards.

LONDON, Dec. 27.—Winston Spencer Churchill has cabled and the Morning Post publishes today an account of his escape from captivity with the Boers, after having been made a prisoner in the reconnaissance of the armored train at Estcourt. The dispatch, which is dated Lorenzo Marques, December 21, says:

"On the afternoon of December 14 the Transvaal secretary of war informed me that there was little chance of my release. I therefore resolved to escape, and the same night I left the state schools prison in Pretoria by climbing the wall when the sentries' backs were turned momentarily. I walked through the streets of the town without disguise, meeting many burglars, but was not challenged in the crowd. I got through the pickets of the town guard and struck into Delagoa Bay railroad. I walked along it, evading watchers at bridges and culverts, and waited for a train beyond the first station.

"The 11.15 goods train from Pretoria had arrived before I reached the place, and was moving at full speed. I boarded it with great difficulty and hid under coal sacks. I jumped from the train before dawn, and was sheltered during the day in a small wood, in company with a huge vulture which displayed a lively interest in me. I walked on at dusk. There were no more trains that night.

"The danger of meeting guards of the railway line continued, but I was obliged to follow it, as I had no compass or map. I had to make wide detours to avoid bridges, stations and huts, and so my progress was very slow. Chocolate is not very satisfying food. The outlook was gloomy, but I persevered with God's help for five days. My food supply was very precarious. I was lying up by daylight and walking by night.

"Meanwhile my escape had been discovered, and my description telegraphed everywhere. All trains were searched, and every eye was on the water for me. Four times wrong people were arrested. The sixth day I managed to board a train beyond Middleburg, whence there was direct service to Delagoa. In the evening I concealed myself in a railroad truck under a great pile of sacks. I had a small stock of food water. I remained hidden so, changing discovery. The Boers searched the train at Komatipoort, but did not search deep enough. After some 66 hours of misery, I came safely here.

"I am very weak, but am free; have lost many pounds in weight, but am light in heart. I shall avail myself of every opportunity henceforward to urge earnestly unflinching and uncompromising prosecution of the war."

TYPHOID IN LADYSMITH

Its Casualty List Is an Eloquent Appeal for Early Relief.

NEW YORK, Dec. 27.—Whether the Ladysmith garrison is fighting gallantly outside or is exposed to a closer and more destructive fire from the enemy's guns, these casualty lists, with their fatal cases of typhoid fever, are eloquent appeals to the British army beyond the Tugela to rescue it as speedily as possible from prolongation of the siege. The relief of Ladysmith has become General Buller's first objective point, and everything else has been sacrificed to attain that object.

An outpost affair is reported from Chieveley, where a picket of Hussars, posted on a hill, was surprised by a party of a hundred Boers, two troopers being killed and five or six horses captured.

FINANCE IS ELATED

She Hopes for Trouble Between England and America Out of the Flour Seizures.

NEW YORK, Dec. 27.—A dispatch to the Herald from Paris, says: The demands that are being made in certain quarters in England for immediate action on the part of the British government to prevent the transportation of supplies to the Boers by way of the Delagoa bay, have quickened French interest in the rumored possibility of trouble between the United States and Great Britain in consequence of the alleged seizure by British cruisers of American flour off Lorenzo Marques.

Nothing so tickles the French palate as the merest suspicion of a possibility of seeing an Anglo-American quar-

rel grow out of the Transvaal war. M. Flourens, a former minister for foreign affairs, in the following remarks on the subject, reflects the moderate French opinion: "In my judgement, the British naval commander acted over hastily if he made the seizure reported.

"Such action would be particularly serious in the case of the American ships, but on the other hand, that American cargoes are the ones involved is sufficient ground for assurance that no new international complications will arise. No breach of the present friendly relations between the two countries can be regarded as possible and in a very few days the episode probably will sink into insignificance.

"Some such incident as the one now occupying the Washington state department was to be foreseen, owing to the British government's natural irritation over the trend of affairs at Delagoa bay.

If the rumors that success is reaching the Boers by way of Lorenzo Marques are true, then Portuguese East Africa is likely to become an interesting center of war operations, for such violation of neutrality Great Britain cannot tolerate. Downing street probably will put an end to the abuse if it exists, but I do not think the result will be Portugal's loss of colony. All the news from Lorenzo Marques, however, is too vague to serve as ground for an opinion and those here are rash who attempt to prophesy just what will be the course of events there."

MORE FOOLISHNESS

Talk Like This Will Not Alarm England.

NEW YORK, Dec. 27.—Relative to the attitude of the British revolutionary societies toward the government of Great Britain at the present juncture of affairs, the Evening Post today quotes an officer of the Clan-na-nael as saying: "England can only be made to feel by physical force and we are now going to give her some Boer treatment.

"We did intend going out and sinking that first expedition from Canada to South Africa, but thought it better to wait a little. We can mobilize our men without much difficulty for an attack on Canada and we are fairly well armed. We have lots of Springfield rifles and are handy with the bayonet.

"No decision has been arrived at. Everything will depend on the immediate future. We have either regiments or companies all over the country and are fairly well drilled and a great many of our men are in the militia. The Ancient Order of Hibernians numbers about 250,000 and a majority of its members belong to our organization."

THE FENIAN NONSENSE

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 27.—There is a general movement among the Irish here to aid the Boers in their war with England. A call was sent out today for a special assessment on every member of the order of Hibernians, of which there are 25,000 in this city. A return of \$25,000 is expected, which will help to swell the general fund of \$1,000,000 which organizations throughout the country seek to raise.

HEAVY BOSTON FAILURES

BOSTON, Dec. 27.—The total liabilities of the concerns here which have failed within the past two weeks will reach close to \$17,000,000.

THE REBELS KEPT GOING

Another Large Band Dispersed by Colonel Lockett's Forces.

OTIS REGULATING MARRIAGES

All Religious Restrictions Removed and Civil Ceremonies Will Be Recognized.

MANILA, Dec. 27.—Colonel Lockett, with a force of 500, including artillery, attacked this morning a strong force of insurgents numbering about one thousand men, entrenched in the mountains near Montalban, about five miles northeast of San Mateo. The enemy was completely routed, the Americans pursuing them through the hills, amid which they fled in every direction. Four Americans were wounded. The Filipino loss was very large.

GENERAL OTIS' DECREE

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27.—General Otis has issued a decree authorizing the celebration of civil marriages in the Philippines. Heretofore marriages were celebrated by the Catholic church so that the protestants and non-Christians were prohibited from marrying.

The decree does not interfere with Catholics, who may be married according to their own rites, but extends the privilege of civil marriage to those who desire it, just as is practiced in the United States.

THE MAINE VICTIMS

Only One of the Bodies Buried by Relatives

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27.—Frederick C. Holzer, an ordinary seaman, killed in the explosion of the battleship Maine, is the only one of the 121 bodies disinterred from Colon cemetery, Havana, and brought to Newport News by Captain Sigbee in the Texaco, which will not be buried at Arlington tomorrow. The body of Holzer has been shipped to New York, where it will be received by relatives. About 50 requests for bodies of victims of the Maine disaster, but in only 19 of these cases had the bodies been identified. The other twenty were either in the list of unidentified dead or among the bodies not recovered.

Owing to the confusion in which the graves were found when the dead were disinterred at Havana, the department has reluctantly decided not to extend to the relatives and friends of the other nine positively identified bodies the privilege of burying the remains at home.

MORE TROOPS ORDERED

HALIFAX, N. S., Dec. 27.—A cablegram received from England today by the military authorities here orders the Leicester regiment, known as the Royal Canadians, now doing duty on this station, to sail January 10 for duty in South Africa.

Suggesting Holiday Gifts

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This great store—large, airy and elegant—abounds with Holiday Novelties in Boys' and Young Men's Clothes. There is not a style in any article of Man's wear that is not shown here in miniature for Boys.

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